

in the Sri Bhoja country and other islands of the Archipelago for chewing with nutmegs, cloves and Barus camphor, for the purpose of rendering the mouth fragrant. *Pin-lang* is of course the Malay word *pinang*, areca nut.

In I Tsing's time, it seems therefore that the Malay country *par excellence* was in Central Sumatra, a fact agreeing very well with native Malay tradition on the subject, which derives the origin of many of the Malays of the Peninsula from the old Central Sumatran State of Menangkabau.

The etymological signification of the national name *Malayu* has been a subject of much dispute. I Tsing does not throw any additional light upon it; but he makes it quite clear that the word had in his time a local significance, and denoted the particular region from which a large part of the Malays of the modern *Tanah Malayu* love to trace their origin.

C. O. Blagden.

The Putri Gunong Ledang.

(FAIRY PRINCESS OF MT. OPHIR.)

The following extract from an essay written by a Malacca Chinese boy may be of interest to readers of the Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. I give the boy's own words.

The aborigines of Malacca used to believe that Mt. Ophir was a sacred mountain. Mt. Ophir is also believed to be so by the Malays, as well as by most of the Strait-born Chinese. Since many years ago, neither Malays nor Chinese have ever reached the top of the mountain, where, as our ancestors say, there is plenty of gold strewn along the floor. Although some of the Europeans have been there, yet the natives have not believed it. It is said that there is a fairy who takes charge of the sacred mountain. In the morning, as the sun rises, the fairy is a beautiful girl playing near her well-built hut. At noon, as the sun is right over our head, the girl changes into a maiden; and in the evening, as the sun sets, the maiden becomes an old woman. The same thing happens every day.

There is also a sacred tiger possessed by the fairy as her sole guardian of the mountain. It always sits half-way down the mountain. As most of the uneducated are superstitious, they believe that there is also a kind of plant grown near the house of the fairy, and any one who gets a leaf from that plant and eats it, besides being always young and beautiful, will never die. Many of the ancient people of Malacca attempted to get some of the leaves, and many lost their lives in the attempts because of their absurdity.

This story was first told by a Malay who accidentally reached the top of the mountain. One day while cutting wood with some of his companions he was accidentally separated from them and was left alone in the forests. What was his alarm when he saw a tiger; and being unable to get rid of the wild beast, he fell on the ground and fainted. He was carried to the fairy, and being a worshipper, as people were in those days, he was well treated. He stayed there for several hours, and was told to pick some of the largest lumps of saffron and take them home. While he was walking the bag became heavier, and he then threw some of the lumps away. When he reached home he found that the saffron turned into gold. This is the story which the Malays as well as the Straits Chinese believe about Mt. Ophir or Gunong Leydang."

R. J. Wilkinson.

Golden Flowers.

There was living in Singapore not many years ago a Chinaman in very poor circumstances, who possessed, however, a small garden, in which grew a plant of the Pandan Wangi (*Pandanus laevis*), a tree which is often cultivated for its scented leaves used for flavouring rice and for making a kind of *pot pourri* used at weddings. He supplied the tree liberally with manure, and one moonlight night he was surprised to see it bearing a red flower. Going to examine it next day, no flower was to be seen, but next night it was there again, and he climbed up and got it, and put it on a table in his house. On the